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27056 Joy Road • Redford, MI 48239-1949
(313) 937-9000 • FAX (313) 937-9165
www.poam.net
e-mail: poam@poam.net

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September 3, 2009

Senator Tom George
Michigan State Senate
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

Dear Senator George:

I am writing today in support of House Bill 4459 which would add trauma scene cleanups under the Medical Waste Act, among other things. This legislation is a product of a Michigan Department of Environmental Quality workgroup made up of an array of stakeholders with knowledge of and interest in medical waste and surrounding issues, including updating language regarding trauma scene cleanups, who is authorized to perform the services, as well as proper disposal of the waste under the Medical Waste Act.

A trauma scene cleanup involves the proper removal and disposal of blood-borne pathogens and body organisms generated after a car accident, suicide, crime scene, or industrial accident. Currently some of these cleanups are being handled by a wide range of companies. Some janitorial services and carpet cleaners have been taken on jobs involving the cleanup of a trauma scene. The work involved in cleaning such an incident and disposing of the trauma scene waste varies greatly from normal janitorial or carpet cleaning services. Creating clear standards for these cleanups will ensure that only qualified individuals will be cleaning these incidents.

House bill 4458 includes registration of Trauma Scene Waste Management Practitioners which, while not a direct recommendation of the DEQ workgroup, is an important action necessary to properly protect the public health and the environment. These are common sense reforms that will benefit the citizens of our state.